DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 101 623 HE 006 215

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TITLE The Academic Community: A Backup Force to State Government. A Summary Report.
INSTITUTION Southern Regional Education Board, Atlanta, Ga.
SPONS AGENCY National Science Foundation, Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE 74
NOTE 31p.
AVAILABLE FROM Southern Regional Education Board, 130 Sixth Street N.W., Atlanta, Georgia 30313 ($1.00)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$1.95 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS Educational Finance; Educational Planning; *Higher Education; *Southern States; *State Boards of Education; *State Government; *Statewide Planning

ABSTRACT

State governments today are being confronted with new responsibilities that require innovative approaches to better serve the people they represent. This study of relationships between state governments and the academic community in a 14-state region of the South provides clear descriptions of the needs of state governments and delineates the capabilities and limitations of the academic community in meeting those specific needs. The report identifies the obstacles to overcome and recommends specific steps that can be taken to achieve more productive working relationships. Recommendations include: (1) Establishment of a coordinating council (in states where appropriate) to serve as a facilitator and harmonizer in improving working relationships between state government and the academic community; (2) reassessment by state agencies of ways they can draw effectively on the specialized resources of the state's institutions of higher education; (3) establishment of separate line items in the budgets of appropriate state agencies to help alleviate the difficulty of financing public service activities; (4) establishment of public service positions in central boards of higher education (where appropriate) to encourage member institutions to provide services to state government. (Author/PG)

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The Academic Community:

A Backup Force to State Government

A Summary Report

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1974

$1.00

This report summarizes a study prepared with the support of National Science Foundation Grant No. GI-37858. Any opinions, findings, conclusions or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation.

Foreword

State governments today are being confronted with new responsibilities which require innovative approaches to better serve the people they represent. Leaders of state government and the academic community alike are becoming aware that the resources of universities and colleges can be used more extensively to help state governments solve the complex problems which they face.

This study of relationships between state governments and the academic community in a 14-state region of the South provides clear descriptions of the needs of state governments and delineates the capabilities and limitations of the academic community in meeting those needs. The report identifies the obstacles to overcome and recommends specific steps that can be taken to achieve more productive working relationships.

Improved working relationships between the two groups, however, will not occur automatically. Deliberate, positive steps must be taken both by state government and the academic community if closer working relationships are to be achieved.

It is the hope of SREB that the results of this study will stimulate officials of state governments and the academic institutions in the region to reassess the ways they can work together for the benefit of the citizens they both serve. Consideration might well be given to the replication of the study in other regions of the United States, possibly under the auspices of other regional education agencies.

Winfred L. Godwin
President
Southern Regional Education Board

Acknowledgments

The contributions of the following persons who served on the study team are gratefully acknowledged: Fred L. Bates, Cameron Fincher, Serge Gonzales, Nicholas Henry, Edwin Jackson, J. J. Lancaster, Huey B. Long, Jerry McCaffery, Robert Sellers, Bijan Sepasy, Gerald Robbins, J. W. Fanning, William Nash, Dorothy Sparer, and John C. Waters.

The project director is indebted to the continuing interest and counsel of George W. Baker of the National Science Foundation, Research Applied to National Needs, and of the following persons who served on the study advisory committee: John Chavis, A. C. Flora, E. Walton Jones, and Augustus B. Turnbull, III.

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Highlights

The public service budgets *for all purposes* of 37 institutions in the 14-state region reporting these data totaled $200,650,000 in 1972-73. Land grant institutions accounted for 85 percent of these funds. During the same year, the region's universities and colleges held contracts and grants *with state governments* in the amount of $32,800,000.

Nearly three-fourths of the state agency officials indicated they had requested some kind of service from a university or college in the state within the past year. While they were generally satisfied with the services received, they believe the quality of services provided by universities and colleges could be improved.

State agency officials believe the greatest service capabilities of universities and colleges are in educational/training activities. Officials of universities and colleges agree. Both groups also feel that universities and colleges are fairly competent in dealing with technical/program problems and long-term and short-term policy issues.

Generally, universities and colleges rated their service abilities highest in the fields of education, human resources and health, agriculture, natural resources and environment, and economic development.

The most frequently mentioned needs of state government for university/college services were research and consultation on broad, complex subjects such as environmental concerns, energy, and comprehensive growth and development policies. A majority of the state agencies studied expect to increase their use of the state's universities and colleges during the next five years.

The obstacles to closer working relationships include: (1) program and policy limitations, (2) difficulties in financing public service activities, (3) certain attitudes which tend to inhibit closer interaction, and (4) poor communication between the two groups. Most officials of state government and the academic community expressed the hope that better working relationships could be achieved.

Recommendations include:

- establishment of a coordinating council (in states where appropriate) to serve as a facilitator and harmonizer in improving working relationships between state government and the academic community;
- reassessment by state agencies of ways they can draw effectively upon the specialized resources of the state's institutions of higher education;

- establishment of separate line items in the budgets of appropriate state agencies to help alleviate the difficulty of financing public service activities;
- establishment of public service positions in central boards of higher education (where appropriate) to encourage member institutions to provide services to state government;
- development of appropriate organizational structures and procedures at institutions of higher education to enable them to be more effective in serving state government;
- establishment of a regional study group to formulate model performance standards for faculty involved in public service activities

There appear to be few basic differences between state governments and universities and colleges in the 14-state region concerning their willingness to develop closer working relationships. A large proportion of both groups studied believe the academic community can provide useful services to state governments if certain practical issues can be overcome.

Purpose and Background

INTRODUCTION

This is the summary report of the results of a regional study to determine ways in which the resources of the academic community can be used more effectively and efficiently to assist state governments as they attempt to cope with the increasingly complex problems of society.

It is concerned with the needs of state governments, the public service capabilities of universities and colleges, the impediments to more effective working relations between state governments and the academic community, and means whereby institutions of higher education in a 14-state region of the South might become more responsive to the needs of state governments.

The states included in the study are those presently holding membership in the Southern Regional Education Board: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia.

BACKGROUND

The study is the result of interest expressed by the staff of the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), governors, state legislators, and university leaders in the 14 states. Formal work on the project began in May 1973, following determination of the issues to be studied and the formation of a study team. The study was funded by a grant from the Research Applied to National Needs (RANN) Directorate of the National Science Foundation.

THE NEED

Officials of state government and the academic community are generally aware of the needs of state government and the potential benefits of greater involvement by universities and colleges in assisting state governments meet those needs. Many believe that the academic community contains resources which state governments can draw upon as a supplemental aid to help work out solutions to the complex social, economic, and technical problems facing the South.

In many states of the region, the universities and colleges comprise the largest collection of expertise in the state. University resources include large, well-stocked libraries, close proximity to federal laboratories and research facilities, computer capabilities, and unique skills relating to research and education.

On their own initiative, many university professors have made their services available to local communities, development groups, and government agencies. Some universities have developed sizable public service budgets which enable them to render services to state agencies and other public groups. Others have set up special public service institutes which enable them to respond quickly to a variety of requests by state governments.

In many instances, however, the academic community is little involved in assisting state government. The two groups are concerned with different matters and go their separate ways year after year. Moreover, when they do develop working relationships, the outcome is not always favorable. Officials of state government sometimes complain that the response time of universities is too long to enable them to be effective in assisting state government. On the other hand, caught in the middle of tight budgets and the need to discharge their regular responsibilities, many universities have difficulty in releasing their staff on short notice to help government.

Moreover, some university and college faculties are inexperienced in working with government agencies. Their sharply honed analytical techniques, learned through years of training and research, are sometimes difficult to apply or are inappropriate in the setting of state government. Unfortunately, it takes only a few unfavorable experiences to dampen enthusiasm on both sides.

In view of these conditions, it is doubtful that state governments and the academic community will develop stronger, more effective working relationships merely by making new promises of better cooperation. Undoubtedly, there are some significant obstacles to the development of closer working relationships between the academic community and state government. It was the consensus of those who conceived this project that the entire issue should be studied. Moreover, the alternatives with regard to the actions that might be taken to improve working relationships between the two groups need to be carefully considered before a major breakthrough can be achieved.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

This study began with the assumption that closer cooperation between state governments and the academic community is a reasonable and desirable goal. Moreover, the key to determining how more and better services can be provided to state governments is to study the present situation, identify the obstacles affecting closer cooperation between the two groups, and recommend ways they can be overcome.

Other issues are also involved:

- What kinds of services are universities and colleges in the region now providing to their state governments?
- What types of institutions are providing them?
- What are their competencies and limitations?
- Are state governments satisfied with the amount and quality of assistance they are receiving from the academic community?
- What kinds of services do state agencies need?
- What kinds of assistance will be needed during the next five years?
- Would agencies accept more help if it were more readily available?

- What specific changes are needed on both sides to enable the academic community to become a stronger backup force to state governments?

Thus the general purpose of this study was to find out how the resources of the academic community can be used more effectively in serving state governments. This goal, in turn, is intended to influence officials of both state governments and the academic community to take the positive actions necessary to stimulate the flow of university services to state government.

MEANING OF PUBLIC SERVICE

For the purposes of this study, *public services* are those which result from the official provision by a university or college of staff time, materials, or equipment for training, research, planning, or technical consultations. The definition was further restricted to services performed for units of state government such as departments, divisions, bureaus, offices, commissions, committees, and task forces of the executive, judicial, and legislative branches of state government.

The kinds of services that fall within the intended meaning of *public service* are:

- educational and training programs (including noncredit courses of instruction, conferences, workshops, and short-courses) conducted on or off campus for individuals or groups other than regularly enrolled students;
- faculty and student internships and university/government personnel exchange programs;
- consultative services on technical, planning, policy, or administrative problems for outside groups; and
- mission-oriented or applied research services.

It is *not* intended that public service include resident instruction, academic research, or internal service activities performed on campus for the benefit of faculty, staff, or students.

INFORMATION SOURCES

The university/college data were obtained by mailing a questionnaire to a group of 84 colleges and universities in the region. These included 59 publicly-supported doctoral degree-granting institutions, 19 predominantly black institutions having graduate degree programs of some type, and six private doctoral degree-granting universities.

Sixty-one of the 84 universities and colleges surveyed completed the questionnaires in a usable manner and returned them to SREB—a response rate of nearly 73 percent. A similar questionnaire was mailed to 224 units of state government in the region. Of this number, 185 questionnaires were completed and returned to SREB—a response rate of over 83 percent.

In addition to the questionnaires, personal interviews were conducted with officials of 42 units of state government and 48 universities and colleges in the region. Also, six major universities located *outside* the region were studied to gain additional perspective in interpreting conditions and attitudes in the study region. The institutions studied were the University of Missouri, Michigan State University, the University of Utah, Pennsylvania State University, the University of Wisconsin, and the University of California (Berkeley).

Summary of Findings

EXTENT OF INVOLVEMENT

Universities and colleges in the 14-state region in fiscal year 1972-73 were involved heavily in public service and extension activities. A large proportion of those services, however, were provided to groups within the state other than state government.

The public service budgets *for all purposes* of 37 institutions reporting these data totaled $200,650,000 in 1972-73—about $14 million per state. Land grant schools accounted for 85 percent of these funds. Institutions with total enrollments of 20,000 or more students administered 80 percent of the total public service funds for all purposes.

During the same year the region's universities and colleges held contracts or grants *with state governments* in the amount of $32,800,000. This figure probably underestimates the actual amount, however, because it does not include services to state government which were funded under established programs through direct appropriations to the institutions.

Nevertheless, the combined evidence suggests that other groups in the region draw upon the services of universities and colleges to a much greater extent than state government. Officials of universities and colleges indicated they serve the federal government, state-wide civic and professional groups, and private business less than state government. But they serve city and county governments, local civic and development groups, and professional groups more than state government.

Nonland grant institutions provided nearly twice as much service (in terms of dollars) to state government via contracts and grants than land grant institutions. This may be due, however, to a greater incidence of free services to state government by land grant institutions. Since the latter typically have much larger regularly funded public service programs, they are in better financial positions to provide unfunded services. But firm evidence is not available to confirm whether or not they actually do. Also, the land grant institutions are fewer in number than the nonland grant schools, which may account in part for the land grant schools' lower volume of contracts and grants with state government.

Many universities and colleges in the region operate centers, bureaus, extension units, institutes, and other special units which have the ability to serve their state governments. Their titles cover the gamut of functions carried out by state government—natural resources, health, business and economics, criminal justice, public affairs, government, continuing education, and many others.

Some of the special units of universities and colleges appear to be more research oriented than service oriented. Nevertheless, most of these units have the potential to be effective and would be willing to serve state government if given the opportunity.

About two-thirds of the state agency officials interviewed stated that they *occasionally* draw upon the resources of local colleges and universities for assistance in helping solve state problems, and 27 percent reported that they *often* use them. However, they also reported that they use private consulting firms and other government units (such as special task forces) to a greater extent than they use universities and colleges.

Nearly three-fourths of the agency officials interviewed said they had requested some kind of service from a university or college in the state within the past year, and most were satisfied with the response. The most frequent kind of service requested was research or a study concerning some need of the agency. Educational and training services also were requested frequently.

Although most such arrangements were initiated by the agency through university/college channels, agencies also use university and college faculty as private consultants. In 1972-73, 38 percent of the agencies studied used university freelance consultants from two to five days annually, and 31 percent used them from five to 15 days.

Not surprisingly, university officials' estimate of the extent of independent consulting with state government by their faculties was less than one-half of that reported by state agencies. Nevertheless, the evidence obtained in this study suggests that freelance consulting by faculty with state government is far less than that effected through university/college channels though few universities and colleges actively discourage the practice.

ADEQUACY OF SERVICES

A majority of state agency officials believe that universities and colleges in their states are providing reasonably good services to state government but that the quality of services could be improved. They believe that when services are unsatisfactory it is due in part to the nature of the problems and operating procedures of state government, and in part to the structure and nature of resources at the university level.

State agency officials believe the greatest capabilities of universities and colleges are in education/training activities. Universities and colleges agree. Agency officials also feel that university/college faculties are fairly competent in dealing with specific technical and program problems. For example, many respondents mentioned computer technology as an area where they felt certain faculties could provide, or had provided, valuable assistance to the agency.

Somewhat mixed reactions were obtained in response to questions about the use of university faculty on policy issues. Both state agency and university officials indicated that faculties could, in general, provide valuable services to state government on both long-term and short-term policy issues.

In other questions, however, agency officials tended to rank assistance with policy issues lower than educational/training and technical/program service capabilities. During direct interviews, when the meaning of the term "policy" could be discussed, both agency and university officials

usually concluded that faculty often could provide valuable inputs needed for policy decisions, but should not get too involved in policy matters, particularly those with political implications.

No instances were reported by university officials in which state agencies tried to take advantage of a university or college to gain a policy end, but agency officials mentioned several cases in which they felt university faculty members were overly zealous in seeking a policy change.

Generally, most agencies of state government were satisfied with the last service they received from a university or college. Some 32 percent indicated they were very satisfied, while 56 percent were merely satisfied. Only nine agency respondents out of 158 said they were definitely dissatisfied with the last service received.

This is not intended to imply, however, that relationships between state agencies and universities have always been rosy. Many interviews with state officials included descriptions of unfavorable experiences—especially faculty limitations in dealing with problems of state government. Some agency officials expressed frustration at not being able to involve university faculty more effectively more frequently.

After talking about university/college strengths in assisting state government– innovative ideas, broad expertise, diversity of knowledge--agency officials often mentioned working relationships with faculty who were impractical, excessively theory-oriented, or inflexible. Other criticisms included mercenary attitudes, tardiness in performance, and undue crusading for one cause or another.

Similarly, university officials occasionally mentioned that some agency officials wanted only free services, expected the university to provide someone immediately to help on some crisis problem, or were so impatient for results that faculty could not do creditable work in the time allotted. One university official expressed the view that officials of state agencies were "too preoccupied with putting band-aids on today's problems rather than seeking innovative solutions to emerging problems."

But a vast majority of university and agency officials felt that the long-term prospects were good. Most respondents believe that the academic community is now, or can become, a positive force in assisting state government, and that there is much to be gained by attempting to develop closer working relationships.

Both university and agency officials agreed that some faculty members were much more adept at assisting state government than others. Administrators of public service programs at universities and colleges therefore must be highly selective about whom they encourage to assist state government. It does little good to coerce a teacher or researcher to assist state government if he has no genuine interest in doing so.

A necessary condition, of course, is that one working with a unit of state government should be knowledgeable in the subject area on which one is providing assistance to state government. Beyond that, the person should have a general understanding of government operations and decision procedures and an ability to apply his knowledge in spite of imperfect data and severe time constraints.

Although most universities and colleges have no formal criteria governing the conditions under which they will assist state governments, they often have informal criteria in mind when negotiating for work. For example, they try to determine whether they have a genuine capability of

providing assistance on a particular request. They are also careful to avoid research or consulting services which might embroil the institution in political struggles.

Generally speaking, universities and colleges rated their abilities highest in the fields of education, human resources and health, agriculture, natural resources and environment, and economic development. But many instances were reported in which valuable assistance was or could be provided to state government in narrow technical fields as well as broader areas, such as comprehensive planning issues.

In addition to formal research and consulting arrangements, some state officials identified individuals at universities and colleges with whom they frequently consulted on an informal basis by phone or in short conversations. Where they exist, such arrangements appear to be among the most productive forms of assistance to state government.

Officials of the academic community are in fairly close agreement on the nature of the obstacles to closer, more effective working relationships between the two groups. Overall, university and college officials ranked the order of importance of various obstacles slightly differently than did state agency officials. Individuals in both groups tended to stress some factors more than others.

OBSTACLES

The results of the survey of state agencies and the academic community revealed eight types of obstacles to more effective working relationships. These are summarized in Table 1.

At the top of the list of both the academic institutions and state agencies was "program and policy limitations." Generally, the kinds of factors referred to were those inherent in the organizational structure, purpose, or staffing situation of both groups.

For example, academic institutions often are not organized in a manner to provide services quickly, or the agency is too pressed for time to frame issues, contact a university and make arrangements to have someone work on the problem. Although many of the barriers of this type can be overcome, it will take a conscious effort by both groups.

Universities and colleges were generally more conscious of funding limitations than state agencies, although both groups recognize the problem as a significant barrier. There are many aspects of this problem, but two general issues were mentioned frequently.

One is that many universities and colleges do not have funds specifically budgeted for public service activities. Generally, their funds are appropriated for the express purposes of teaching, research, or a specific public service, and are not usable, particularly on short notice, for any need that happens to exist in state government.

State agencies in some states can gain access to funds to pay for university services, but in many instances they cannot do so for a particular need at the time it is needed. With commitment and deliberate efforts, these problems also can be overcome.

About 15 percent of the state agency officials and 21 percent of the university officials cited conflicting attitudes in both groups that tend to inhibit closer cooperation. Some agency officials, for example, feel intimidated by university faculty, or distrust their motives. In other instances, they see no need for university assistance, feeling instead that their pro-

TABLE 1

Obstacles to Good Working Relationships

Obstacles Cited	Agency response (percent)	University response (percent)
Program or policy limitations	28	24
Lack of funds or inability to finance work	13	23
Attitudes which inhibit cooperation or interaction	15	21
Poor communication between the two groups	21	18
Fear of political entanglements or repercussions	2	7
Conflicts in theory and approach to state problems	9	2
Doubts about faculty competency to assist on state problems	8	–
Other	4	5

grams can be operated quite well without assistance from any outside group.

University officials, on the other hand, sometimes claimed that state government is much harder to work with than other outside groups. Some respondents said that state government officials too often waited until a crisis had developed and then expected someone from the university to come immediately to their aid. Thus, there is fear and distrust present to some extent on both sides.

Another barrier of considerable importance is lack of contact or communication between units of state government and the academic community. In the words of one respondent, "we live and operate in two different worlds." It often was claimed that representatives of the two groups rarely have occasions to meet with or get to know the other. University faculty therefore do not understand the problems of state government, and the latter does not learn of the interest and capabilities of university faculty in assisting operating units of state government.

A few state agency officials also doubted the competency of university faculty, and a small percentage of the university respondents expressed some fear of political entanglements when working with state government. But their concerns were minor in relation to positive attitudes expressed.

Direct interviews with university and state agency officials confirmed the survey results but added a few new dimensions to the obstacles previously identified. About two-thirds of the agency officials mentioned that universities and colleges do not make known to state agencies the public service and educational capabilities they can provide to government.

Most, however, did not think that the "advertising" of services through printed brochures, catalogs, or inventories of services would be of great benefit to the agencies. They would prefer to have direct contacts with persons at universities and colleges who can explain the services they could provide and the conditions under which they could be made available.

Others said there was no real problem in knowing whom to contact for services. And some said they had a long history of good working relations with one or more universities in their state.

Similar responses were obtained from university officials. A chief concern in some institutions, however, was that they did not have funds or staff time to provide services. Others mention the difficulty of interesting their faculty in working with state government because of heavy academic responsibilities, philosophic objections, or the practice of the institution of not rewarding faculty for public service activities.

It is interesting to note that neither group blamed the other entirely for the barriers they felt were important. They regarded them as the products of two different types of institutions designed to do different things. Except for a relatively few adamant critics, most expressed the hope that better relationships could be achieved, and often suggested specific ideas for improving relationships.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

Interviews with agency officials were particularly helpful in suggesting ways to improve working relationships between state government and the academic community. About 46 specific suggestions were obtained, ranging from broad, all-encompassing suggestions to specific ideas intended to remedy particular situations.

Seventeen suggestions pertained to the need to improve communication and coordination between persons in the academic community and state government, although most respondents did not know exactly how this problem could be solved. A few suggested that state agencies appoint a person to be their liaison with universities. Others suggested that the universities or colleges interested in providing services appoint someone to meet with state officials periodically.

Eleven respondents suggested that means be devised to permit selected faculty members to work with state agencies, primarily as a means of acquainting them with the operations of state government, and to learn first hand about their needs. An interagency advisory committee also was suggested.

Eight agency officials suggested that universities and colleges eliminate overhead costs on contracts with state government and work out better funding resources and procedures. Two suggested that funds might be provided to state agencies for the purpose of hiring university faculty for whatever legitimate needs the agencies might have during a fiscal year.

Other agency officials mentioned the need for improving attitudes at both the state government and university levels. One suggested that the initiative for changing unfavorable attitudes would have to come from the academic community. Another respondent favored a formal policy, implemented by the governor, encouraging greater use of the talent available at the state's universities and colleges. Still another respondent felt that

attitudes could be improved if the state legislature established a policy encouraging state agencies to make greater use of the universities.

Other suggestions include:

- changing university rewards systems to give faculty more credit for public service work;
- making better use of informal contacts;
- using more state government personnel for teaching;
- exerting greater efforts in matching agency needs to the best university/college resources available;
- establishing a special research fund in the governor's office, or elsewhere, to pay for special needs of state agencies, with trade-off provisions to enable a department in need to acquire funds not needed by other departments;
- organizing one- or two-way personnel exchanges as a means of achieving a better orientation.

University officials likewise offered a number of suggestions for improving relationships between state government and the academic community. Most suggestions for improving the flow of services to state government mentioned the need for greater awareness of state government needs and of university capabilities.

The second most commonly cited recommendation involved better funding. One university president expressed the following point of view held by many university/college officials:

> A conscious effort should be exerted at all points to improve the extent of communication between the two groups, and to establish or develop working relationships between the institution and agencies of government.

As in the case of state agency respondents, university and college officials were more adept at stating the problems to be solved than at suggesting specific actions that would create the desired condition of better mutual cooperation. The following illustrate the range of suggestions:

- More planned programming to identify agency needs and university expertise and constraints
- State agencies should take more initiative in requesting services
- Better funding arrangements
- Establish definite policies for funding and contractual arrangements between state agencies and universities
- The university should take more initiative in determining the needs of state government and in making resources available to serve them
- Strengthen institutions at university-state interface, such as the Southern Regional Education Board
- Develop a state advisory committee composed of agency-university representatives
- Hold periodic meetings with state agencies and promote more personal contacts with agency officials
- Develop an inventory of university resources for use by state government

- Hold a retreat for key university and state officials to develop better knowledge of government needs and university capabilities
- Set up a system whereby university personnel could spend some time in state offices.

In response to a set of seven choices for improving university-government relationships, both state agency and university officials strongly favored the establishment of a coordinating council. Made up of representatives of state government and the academic community, such a council would help identify government needs and coordinate university resources to help meet those needs.

University respondents also favored the suggestion of increasing the rewards to university and college personnel as an inducement to get them involved, but agency officials were not as strongly in favor of this option.

Both state agency and university officials had mixed feelings concerning:

- the establishment of a "university nerve center" to help finance, staff, and coordinate university resources;
- the creation of a special division in the governor's office to encourage and coordinate university services to state government; and
- the establishment of "exchange programs" between universities and state agencies to enable selected personnel in each to become better acquainted with the other.

University officials strongly favored (76 percent) a separate state appropriation from which state agencies could reimburse universities for specific services approved by the state. On the other hand, 53 percent of state agency respondents favored this alternative.

To sum up, the results of the survey and interviews with officials of state government and the academic community in the 14 states revealed a great diversity of conditions, problems, successes, and possibilities. Although threads of the same problems are present in all states, the starting points for effective reasonable solutions are not the same.

In a few states of the region, relatively good relationships have developed through the years, and there is close agreement that benefits are accruing to both parties. Other states have been slower to develop effective working relationships between state government and the academic community. In those instances, the starting point toward building stronger, mutually beneficial relationships is at a different level.

NEEDS OF STATE GOVERNMENT

The most frequently mentioned needs of state government that the academic community might help satisfy were research and consultation on the broad and complex subjects of environmental concerns, energy, and comprehensive growth policies.

Interestingly, all these issues are somewhat new to state government and cannot be categorized easily or assigned to an established agency. Generally, they are multidisciplinary and involve the functions of numerous agencies of state government, including the governor's office and the state legislature.

The academic community also might provide assistance in solving state government problems in these areas in the next five years:

- government finance, evaluation of taxing alternatives, and training in the area of budget preparation;
- training state government personnel in the use of modern tools of management;
- assistance in reorganizing state government, including improving working relationships with municipal and county governments;
- general training (noncredit) of government employees;
- information and data collection services and analysis (e.g., population projections);
- transportation planning, including mass transit;
- general research and consultation on current issues facing state government;
- technical assistance and training in computer applications;
- assistance on a variety of educational programs and policies;
- help in manpower planning and human resource development; and
- the provision of in-service degree programs for government employees.

A majority of the state agencies studied expect to increase their use of the state's universities and colleges during the next five years. Relatively few felt they would have less need of university services in the foreseeable future.

Training/educational services, both formal and informal, are the predominant type of assistance needed. Over one-half of the units studied ranked this first among their needs. About one-fourth of the respondents ranked technical/program services as their greatest need. Eighteen percent ranked policy/planning services highest, and 12 percent ranked administrative/procedural services as their top priority.

OTHER FINDINGS

Relatively few state officials expressed philosophic concerns about working with universities and colleges in their states. They do not think of university/government relationships as violating any principle of separation between the two groups, or that working together would have any disastrous results.

State agency officials are concerned primarily with practical issues. Where can they find the right person to work on a specific problem? Will that person be able to analyze the problem and provide meaningful answers by the time the results are needed? Will he or she understand enough about the processes of state government to provide the right training content for a short-course, to conduct a study, or consult effectively with the staff? Will the cost be reasonable? If so, can the funds required be obtained without excessive red tape? When these kinds of questions can be answered affirmatively, few state agencies would hesitate to request services from the academic community.

Most of the university officials interviewed had little difficulty in justifying on philosophic grounds the practice of serving state government or other public groups. Their concerns were mostly practical. Generally, they expressed the view that the extent of services that their institutions could provide is limited to the extent of financial support they receive to engage in such activities.

Also, there was general agreement that public service or extension activities should not interfere with the institution's primary mission of teaching. That activity is the chief purpose of a university or college by long and established tradition. Thus, the possibility of diverting funds from teaching or other established academic programs to provide services is untenable. But where adequate financial resources are available, most university and college officials would gladly have their institution serve their state government as well as other outside groups in the state.

Not everyone in the academic community, however, believes that universities and colleges should operate organized public service programs. Although such viewpoints were not obtained directly from faculty members when studying academic institutions, many university officials spoke freely of anti public service attitudes on their campuses, and of the impact those beliefs have on developing new programs or operating established ones.

Arguments against organized public service activities take several forms. Some faculty members maintain, for example, that a university or college is a unique institution of society whose exclusive mission is scholarly activities, by which is meant resident instruction and the discovery of new knowledge through research. In their view, institutions of higher education are organized specifically to carry out these functions—not to provide services to outside groups. The latter leads inevitably to a decrease in the overall quality of academic programs and perhaps to loss of academic freedom.

Officials of universities and colleges were also in close agreement that some faculty members are highly effective in working with outside groups and some are not. One university official suggested that personal characteristics and general attitudes are just as important as technical competence in maintaining effective working relationships.

Although the results of the survey questions pertaining to the ideal structure for public service delivery were too varied to be instructive in formulating useful generalizations, they do suggest a significant indirect point: university and college officials do not agree on the ideal structure for the delivery of public services or on the principles that enable them to operate successfully.

Another significant factor is whether local universities encourage their faculty to work with units of state government, and whether they make their services known to the agencies. In many instances state agencies with problems do not think about obtaining assistance from a local university or college. If they have not worked together in the past, they do not know the professors and therefore do not consider them a potential resource.

Among state agencies that have well-established working relationships the viewpoint often is quite different. They tend to regard the academic community as a potential source of assistance by providing training and education, studies, or consultation with agency staff members.

Conclusions

SOME GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

Many of the projected needs of state government for university/college services were identified in this study. Likewise, it has been demonstrated that most university and college officials in the region are committed—to the extent their resources permit—to providing services to state government. Indeed, many universities in the region are now providing substantial levels of service to their state governments through applied research, special studies, internships, educational and training programs, and consultative work.

The findings of this study lead to the conclusion that the academic institutions in some states of the region presently are serving as a major backup force to state government. Overall, the results suggest that other academic units can become a more powerful force in assisting their state governments in coping with a variety of problems affecting the quality of life of citizens in the region.

Of course, not all units of state government are convinced that they have problems which the academic community can help solve, and some are not convinced that they can work effectively with academic people. But it can be said that a majority of the state agencies studied would welcome all the assistance universities are willing to provide.

While most universities and colleges are interested in serving state governments, their abilities to do so are varied. Some now have organized public service programs that enable the institutions to be highly effective in assisting specific units of state government. Others are almost entirely dependent upon informal arrangements such as freelance consulting or fully funded contracts effected through regular academic departments.

Because of the diversity of conditions among the 14 states of the region, few generalizations can be applied uniformly to all states or all universities and colleges. While there are some common problems among the agencies and institutions studied, their underlying causal factors are not all the same. Moreover, the practicability of solutions that might be suggested are affected by past relationships, present structures and procedures, and the degree of interest in effecting improvements. What officials of one state or university may regard as practicable, another may find intolerable.

One of the most frequently cited obstacles to closer, more effective working relationships between campus and capitol is lack of awareness about the needs of state government and the capabilities of universities and

colleges. In states which have a firm commitment to the concept of achieving more and better working relationships, this communication barrier can be overcome. But where past relationships have been poor, or where there has been little work done for state government by universities and colleges, this lack of understanding will be more difficult to correct.

Another frequently mentioned obstacle to closer working relationships is the fact that government and academia are so different in their objectives, programs, organizational structure, and operating procedures. By its nature, state government often must respond to crisis situations or to immediate needs which are impossible to defer. Consequently, agency officials may not have time to define precisely the problem to be solved, to contact a university for assistance, and to wait for the institution to respond.

Academic institutions, on the other hand, must often schedule faculty time for months in advance. They cannot respond immediately to state agency requests. Even if they have faculty regularly assigned to public service activities, it may be difficult to release the right person from another commitment at a moment's notice.

At best, universities can respond effectively on short notice only if they have the organizational machinery to do so. Those institutions that operate multidisciplinary public service units have much greater capabilities for responding to short-notice requests than those which do not.

This is not intended to imply that independent faculty consultations and special leave or release-time arrangements for key faculty members are never satisfactory. In many cases these procedures are effective and they should be continued. However, organized multidisciplinary public service programs enable institutions to be more flexible to respond quickly to a greater variety of requests from state government than would otherwise be possible.

Although differences among states were not formally analyzed, it is apparent that wide variations in university/government relationships exist within the region. In some states strong working relationships have been developed through the years, at least between some universities and some units of state government.

In other states, local universities and colleges have little commitment to serving state government, and the latter simply does not think of the academic community as a potential source of assistance. Consequently, each group goes its separate way year after year, and both have far to go in developing strong working ties.

Again, there is no magic formula whereby a state that has not given much prior consideration to the issue can suddenly create effective working relationships between state government and the academic community. It requires determination to recognize and overcome obstacles, and to implement a course of action based on sound principles of successful working relationships.

SPECIFIC PRINCIPLES

What principles are involved? There are probably many, but the following almost always are involved wherever successful university/government relationships exist.

Commitment. Both state government and the universities and colleges must become sufficiently convinced of the benefits of closer working

relationships to try to achieve them, whether or not they already exist. Not everyone in state government or the academic community needs to be convinced, but at least one university or college and some units of state government have to believe in the concept.

Commitment, of course, must extend beyond mere verbal declarations of good will and mutual cooperation into the area of action. Units of state government must take the time to identify needs and request services, while the academic community must be in a position to respond to such requests.

Funding. In states where productive working relationships have developed between state government and the academic community some means have been provided for the funding of those services. A point often not understood is that there is really no such thing as *free* service. Ultimately, any service provided by a university or college to a state agency must be paid for by citizens through appropriations by the state legislature to the university or to an operating unit of state government. Moreover, the appropriation must be clearly designated for university service. Funds provided to academic institutions for teaching and research are generally not usable for public service activities. Similarly, funds appropriated to state agencies to carry out their regular functions usually cannot be used to purchase services from academic institutions.

Occasionally a university can divert a faculty member from an academic responsibility to assist state government on special tasks. But it cannot do so routinely unless special funds are provided for that purpose. Likewise, a state agency may divert some funds from another intended use to pay the university for special assistance, but it too cannot do so routinely unless special provisions are made.

The main point here is that no manner of cooperation, coordination, or any other measure will substitute for a funding commitment—funds placed either at the agency level or with the university. Ideally, some funds should be provided to both groups.

In a sense, both state government and state-assisted institutions are in the same family with the major portion of their support coming from a common source—the state legislature. Thus, there appears to be no way around the necessity for state appropriations to pay for services. Otherwise, a state would have to be satisfied with a token level of services obtained by temporarily diverting resources from other intended uses or by drawing upon federal grants which occasionally permit the purchase of outside consultants.

Information exchange. Unless universities and colleges are aware of the needs of state government, and persons in state government are knowledgeable about the academic community's ability to assist them, the two organizations will have little potential for working together. Undoubtedly, lack of personal association between the two groups is a major obstacle to closer working relationships.

Based on discussions with numerous officials of state agencies and universities, there is some value in distributing catalogs of capabilities, brochures describing services available, and similar written materials. But their value is limited.

There probably is no substitute for person-to-person relationships to create a mutual awareness of needs and capabilities. Beyond that, the degree of satisfaction obtained by both parties during the first few working arrangements will determine whether the relationship will continue.

University/college limitations. Relationships between universities and agency personnel have on many occasions been strained by unrealistic expectations by both groups about what faculty can do for state government. Academic personnel are, in fact, limited in the kind and extent of services they can satisfactorily provide to operating agencies, the state legislature, and the governor's office.

During initial working relationships in particular, university personnel may not be oriented to the overall program of the client agency, and the constraints within which it must operate. Consequently, university personnel may tend to oversimplify problems they have been requested to work on, or expand them to unrealistic proportions. In this regard, both agency and university are responsible for defining the issues as precisely as possible, as well as the time and data constraints associated with the project.

Other pitfalls have been pointed out by administrators of university public service programs and state agency officials with long experience in close working relationships. One is that novices in public service often overlook the fact that state governments often need most assistance with issues which involve both technical problems and value judgments. University personnel sometimes fail to realize that the problems on which they have been asked to work may be more complex and difficult than any they have faced in the academic world.

Some of the current needs of state government identified earlier in this study—environmental problems, growth policies, land use plans, and energy issues—are not only highly complex in a technical sense, but also involve underlying subjective judgments about unresolved issues. No doubt future problems with which state governments are likely to seek assistance during the next five years will be even more complex and will present even greater challenges to those who are asked to work out practical solutions.

University faculty members can be quite helpful with such problems when the working arrangement is managed properly. They can help identify alternatives and determine their probable consequences under given conditions. Often faculty members can provide assistance on intermediate aspects of a problem, making population projections, for example. They can provide technical insights into broader issues, such as whether it is technically feasible to reclaim strip-mined land, or whether the water resources of a given area are sufficient to satisfy projected industrial and residential demands.

But it is the role of state government, not the academic community, to make decisions affecting the public welfare, to establish policies to guide their implementation, and to organize and operate the delivery systems to carry them out. In these areas, university and college personnel have very limited roles.

The universities and colleges in the region also can be of great value to state government in many kinds of educational activities. Examples include governmental training, special workshops and off-campus credit and noncredit programs tailored to the needs of government employees.

In addition, universities and colleges can assist state government in less formal ways: by short-term consulting of half a day or less, sharing data, helping state agencies find needed information, or modifying some of their academic research to include study of timely issues confronting state government.

In short, if these principles are followed in assessing the specific problems and limitations present in particular states, and reasonable actions are taken to alleviate the practical difficulties now inhibiting closer working relationships, there is no inherent reason why the academic community cannot become a more significant backup force to state government.

Recommendations

A synthesis of all the results of the study, and interpretations of their significance, provided the basis for the recommendations discussed here. Each recommendation is concerned in some way with the factors underlying successful working relationships between the academic community and state governments in the 14 states studied.

All of the recommendations, however, may not be applicable in a particular state. In some states, a tradition of strong mutual relationships already has evolved through the adoption of one or more of the recommendations listed. In states where a particular approach appears to be working satisfactorily, nothing would be gained by adopting an entirely different approach. Indeed, because conditions vary so widely among the 14 states, significantly different approaches might be justified.

Moreover, the recommendations outlined here are not panaceas for achieving more productive working arrangements between state governments and the academic community. Other approaches might be as effective in particular circumstances if wisely applied. Conversely, these recommendations may fail if interest is weak or if they are poorly applied. Commitment and wise administration are vital prerequisites to their success.

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1 **It is recommended that a coordinating council be established in each state, comprised of representatives of the academic community and state government (including functional agencies, the governor's office, and the state legislature) to serve as a facilitator or harmonizer in improving working relationships between the two groups.**

A natural chasm often exists between state government and universities and colleges. Lack of common ground and the absence of a spokesman for the common cause of mutual cooperation explains in part why the academic community and state government have not developed strong working relationships in several states of the region. The above recommendation is intended as a mechanism to bring the two groups more closely together.

The emphasis of this recommendation is on the functions of facilitating and harmonizing—not "coordinating" in the sense that the council would

attempt to control or direct working relationships between units of state government and the academic community.

It is suggested that the governor of each state assume the initiative for appointing the council members, establishing the council's initial charge and operating framework, and nurturing it to the point of effectiveness. This should be carried out, however, in consultation with officials of higher education, the state legislature, and appropriate agencies of state government.

The council should be kept small so that it would not be cumbersome or expensive to operate. Perhaps three representatives from state agencies, one from the governor's office, and three each from the state legislature and the academic community would be adequate.

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2 **It is recommended that agencies of state government in the region reassess ways in which they can draw effectively upon the specialized resources of the state's institutions of higher education, and take positive steps to obtain their assistance wherever appropriate.**

Part of the responsibility for achieving satisfactory working relationships lies with the agencies. First, agencies must assume the initiative in defining problems on which they need assistance and contact the appropriate group to do the work. The results are often unsatisfactory when topics are left open-ended, or when the dimensions of problems to be studied are left to a university study team or consultant to define.

Second, agencies should not shun theory or so-called ivory tower concepts. Most of the activities of state government do involve basic philosophic issues. Instead, agencies should monitor the work in progress to ensure that the study team or consultant is applying theory properly, and that neither is spending time on policy options not applicable to the agency.

Third, state agencies should provide as much advance notice as possible of work to be requested from colleges and universities. Agencies also should allow reasonable amounts of time to complete projects.

Undoubtedly, state agencies often operate under severe time constraints which do not permit them to wait for definitive project results. On the other hand, no one likes to be boxed-in on a study or other assignment for which one will be held accountable later. The time to face these issues is during the initial negotiations.

Fourth, agencies should avoid requesting university/college assistance in carrying out routine tasks or of assuming operational responsibilities for a continuing element of the agency's program. Although such situations are difficult to define, a good general rule is to request assistance from a university or college when they have a *unique* resource or capability that can be useful to the agency.

Finally, when a task is completed, the agency should assess the results, use those results that are applicable, and prepare a critique of the value of the assistance. Such critiques can show the institution providing the service whether it was effective and what use, if any, was made of the results of its efforts.

3 **It is recommended that units of state government facing the chronic problem of inability to pay for university services establish separate line items in their budgets to be used when needed during a budget cycle for services obtained from academic institutions.**

Universities, colleges, and state agencies often are locked into current budget cycles which are not easy to break. Lack of readily available funds, either at the institutional or agency level, is one of the problems inhibiting closer working relationships between state government and the academic community.

The main problem is that often neither state agencies nor the academic institutions are provided funds expressly designated for public services, and it is often cumbersome or impractical to acquire additional funds or to effect budget amendments to satisfy a special need at the time a service is needed. It should be understood that no service is free. In the case of university/government service relationships, the state legislature ultimately pays for services.

To avoid this problem it is recommended that, where appropriate, state agencies be permitted to build into their budgets separate line items designated for services to be provided by universities and colleges in the state during the budget period. Thus an agency or the state legislature at least would have some funds to pay for legitimate but unanticipated services needed any time during a year.

4 **It is recommended that states having central boards or other authorities with general policy responsibilities over all or several units of higher education consider establishment of a position to encourage and coordinate public service/extension activities conducted by institutions under the board's jurisdiction.**

Most states in the region have one or more central boards, councils, or other policy-making organizations which can exert considerable influence toward encouraging the universities and colleges in the region to render greater service to operating units of state government. Indeed, a strong commitment by the central board may be necessary to stimulate institutions under them to develop greater capabilities and become more involved in helping state government resolve its problems.

It, therefore, is suggested that these central boards re-examine the capabilities of institutions under them to provide service to state government, and formulate long-range directions for public service and extension activities just as they do in areas of resident instruction. In some instances it may be appropriate to establish a permanent staff position to encourage and help coordinate public service activities among the institutions under their authority. Several states in the region have done this and have been very satisfied with the results.

In addition, it may be desirable to set up a separate staff position for a person who would meet periodically with operating agencies, representatives of the governor's office, and the state legislature. The purpose of these meetings would be to explain the services available, identify specific needs when academic institutions can provide services, help identify appropriate resources, and make arrangements for specific services to be provided.

5 **It is recommended that institutions of higher education in the region that desire to provide services to state government should develop appropriate mechanisms and procedures that will enable them to be responsive and effective in the delivery of services.**

The results of this study revealed several conditions which are barriers to responsive, effective service delivery. For instance, many institutions of higher education in the region have only token commitments to public service. Others are attempting to provide services to state government through traditional university/college units (departments, and colleges or schools) which often are not appropriate to the task. And many are financially incapable of providing services to outside groups unless the projects are self-sustaining.

In light of these obstacles to service delivery, the following procedures should be considered, particularly by institutions which wish to operate a *major* public service program.

The first step is to make a commitment to the concept of providing services to outside groups, especially to state government, and to determine the extent to which the commitment will be pursued.

Second, provide for adequate funding. It is generally necessary to have a minimum level of funds budgeted for basic staff, travel, and supplies. A public service program funded solely on soft money is unsatisfactory, at least in its beginning stages.

Third, if an institution decides that it has a sizable role in the public service field, it should appoint a person to be in overall charge of its public service activities. This is necessary to insure responsiveness, quality control, and to effect the necessary internal and external arrangements to be effective in working with state governments.

Fourth, institutions that desire to develop organized public service programs should build their capabilities in subject areas where the institution has a strong base of academic competence.

Fifth, develop a multidisciplinary capability—the ability to effectively tap the full range of the institution's knowledge resources. This can be done through the establishment of a multidisciplinary service unit (e.g., an institute of public affairs) which has the capability of drawing on other faculty through release-time, joint-staffing, or perhaps extra compensation procedures.

Sixth, take the initiative in developing closer working relationships with state agencies, the state legislature, and the governor's office. Prepare brochures and meet directly with state officials to explain the institution's capabilities and its desire to assist state government.

6 **It is recommended that a regional committee or study group be established to formulate measurable performance standards for university/colelge faculty members who regularly or occasionally are involved in public service activities.**

A perennial problem affecting the willingness of university and college faculty members to serve their state governments is the belief that public service counts less toward academic promotions than either research or teaching. Consequently, many members who could provide valuable services to state government shun such work in favor of more traditional scholarly activities. Thus, some institutions unwittingly discourage their faculties from serving state governments while embracing the concept in public declarations.

It, therefore, is suggested that a regional study group be appointed to review the issues and draw up measurable standards. Such standards could be used as a starting point or general guide by institutions desiring to revise their internal rewards systems. Either the Southern Regional Education Board or the Southern Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges would be appropriate organizations to initiate and manage the project.

The interest of the study group should focus squarely on the formulation of measurable promotion criteria for faculty members engaged part-time or full-time in public service activities. When completed, the standards should be comparable in quality to, and compatible with, prevailing standards for evaluating teaching and academic research.

The standards should reflect the traditional emphasis of universities and colleges on scholarship, yet account for the differences in product that exist between teaching, research, and public service. They also should take into account different types of institutions, types of public service activities, and scale relationships that might affect their applicability.